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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KPAQ](#) [SOCI](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: THE DIVINE COMRADE M

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher W. Dell under Section 1.5 b

¶1. (U) An op-ed piece in the September 1 edition of the GOZ-controlled Herald newspaper declared President Mugabe to have been divinely appointed. Drawing from the books of Daniel, Romans, Amos, Timothy and John, the rambling piece suggests that God speaks to Mugabe (COMMENT: but, inquiring minds want to know, does Mugabe listen?) and that Mugabe's public addresses are prophetic (COMMENT: if tedious). Critics of the President are therefore defying God, and attacks on the head of state are attacks on "the church." An editorial on the same page, "Bill on NGOs, Churches Timely," identifies the culprits, castigating the leadership of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and other religious leaders for working with NGOs and others critical of the GOZ.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: Like many rulers before him, President Mugabe seems increasingly obsessed with legacy issues as he ages. Now past 80, Mugabe has seen many friends and comrades pass away. The op-ed piece offers a window into how his courtiers flatter him as his inevitable end approaches - mixing religion and politics in an absurd yet dangerous formula.

Dell